

Call for Participation

Conference “Applied Sciences as drivers for regional innovation ecosystems in Africa”

5-7 September 2023, Brussels

1. Context

Building upon previous Africa related events¹ and a continuous engagement in fostering stronger Europe-Africa cooperation, DAAD Brussels is organising this conference in partnership with a network of German Universities of Applied Sciences strongly engaged in Africa.² It seeks to explore and promote the benefits of applied sciences as drivers for regional innovation in Africa. Against the background of the Sustainable Development Goals, the EU-AU Innovation Agenda, the Global Gateway Strategy and the African Union’s Agenda 2063, the need for a stronger focus on applied sciences is paramount. Furthermore, the current state of the world with its geopolitical tensions, food security challenges and the consequences of climate change illustrate the need for a closer cooperation between Europe and Africa.

Besides the various dimensions the applied sciences can cover, there is a strong need for sharing good experiences and discussing what works well. Moreover, to foster regional development and innovation and to successfully implement ambitious policy objectives such as the Green Transition, a shift in focus to education, training and applied research is needed. This calls for a needs-based approach and a continuous dialogue between different education sectors and employers. Universities with a focus on applied sciences are particularly well placed to engage in this dialogue.

The conference is structured in three parts. A public conference on Day 1 targeting practitioners and policy experts that will set the scene and examine the various dimensions of the topic. On Day 2, (higher) education cooperation projects that successfully applied to a call for participation will discuss and share practices in policy workshops clustered around four thematic tracks: (Renewable) Energy and Green Transition; Agriculture and Food Security; (Public) Health; IT/Technology and Innovation. Finally, on Day 3 a policy dialogue (by invitation only) will analyse and discuss the outcomes of the event and discuss pathways to strengthen the role of applied sciences in the future of Europe-Africa collaboration.

¹ E.g. Africa-Europe Conference on Higher Education Collaboration “Investing in people, by investing in higher education and skills in Africa” (Brussels, 24.10.2019)

² University of Applied Sciences Weihenstephan Triesdorf, Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Neu-Ulm University of Applied Sciences, Flensburg University of Applied Sciences.

2. Call for Participation

This call for participation addresses current or recently concluded (higher) education projects in Europe-Africa cooperation with a strong focus on the applied sciences and/or innovation. Given that the policy workshops will be clustered around the following themes, the proposed projects should contribute to discussions on:

- **(Renewable) Energy:** aiming at improving access to secure, affordable and sustainable energy in Africa
- **Agriculture and Food Security:** aiming at strengthening African food safety systems and combating malnutrition
- **(Public) Health:** aiming at a holistic health approach that also takes framework conditions such as social security systems into account
- **IT/Technology and Innovation** aiming at accelerating digital transformation and strengthen technology and innovation capability for long-term competitiveness and socio-economic development in Africa.

Projects should be presented by a partner from Africa or in an EU-Africa tandem.

At the end of the policy workshop, participants will jointly formulate recommendations based on their project experiences and the outcomes of their discussions. These recommendations will be the topic for the “Policy Dialogue” on Day 3.

3. Application procedure and conditions of participation in the workshops

Applicants are requested to submit a 1-page exposé (pdf) with the following information:

- 1) **Contact details of the speaker(s)**: name, surname, organisation you represent, country of residence, email, telephone, your position in the project
- 2) Selection of the **preferred policy track** to which you wish to contribute:
 - a. (Renewable) Energy
 - b. Agriculture and Food Security
 - c. (Public) Health
 - d. IT/Technology and Innovation
- 3) **Summary of the project** describing the following aspects:
 - a. Title
 - b. Context (e.g. funding programme) under which the project is implemented, Partner organisations involved
 - c. Duration
 - d. Objectives and expected outcomes
 - e. Activities
 - f. Achievements
 - g. First lessons learned
 - h. Link to project website

Applicants shall submit their application via email to the DAAD Brussels office (buero.bruessel@daad.de). By sending an application, the applicant confirms that the institution(s) and partner(s) have agreed to contribute to the conference.

Contributions will be in English as the policy workshop will be held in English.

Costs related to travel and accommodation are expected to be covered by the project you represent. A limited number of grants (travel and/or accommodation) are offered by DAAD. Should you need support with the application of a Schengen visa, please let us know in the application.

The **Call is open** from the date of publication **until 31 May 2023**.

Applicants will be informed about the result of the selection process by mid-June 2023.